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REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated January 12, 2005 in which claims 1-9, 12-20 and 23-30 were rejected, and claims 10, 11, 21, 22, 31 and 32 were objected to. With this Amendment, claims 1-5, 7-9, 12-16, 18-20, 23-26 and 28-30 are canceled. Claims 6, 10, 17, 21, 27 and 31 are amended. Claims 6, 10, 11, 17, 21, 22, 27, 31 and 32 are presented for reconsideration and allowance.

In section one, the Office Action stated that claims 10, 11, 21, 22, 31 and 32 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected based claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this Amendment, claims 10, 21 and 31 are amended to include limitations of their respective base claims and intervening claims. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 10, 11, 21, 22, 31 and 32 are in condition for allowance. Favorable action is respectfully requested.

In section three, the Office Action stated that claims 6, 17 and 27 would be allowable is rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, set forth in section five of the Office Action, and to include all of the limitations of their base claims and intervening claims. With this Amendment, claims 6, 17, and 27 are amended to include limitations from their respective base claims and intervening claims. These claims are also amended to recite "a non-terminal leaf node," giving this phrase proper antecedent basis. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that these claims 6, 17 and 27 are in condition for allowance as well. Favorable action is respectfully requested.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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